

**Question for written answer E-004988/2020
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Discharges of pollutants

The Cofaco factory, located on the island of São Miguel in the Azores, frequently discharges untreated waste, which pollutes the sea and affects the coastal community of Rabo de Peixe. This problem has existed for many years and has given rise to a whole host of complaints. The Regional Directorate for the Environment is aware of the situation, but the canned fish factory has never been given a deadline within which to resolve the problems at the industrial waste treatment plant. As early as 2019, the Regional Government confirmed that a regional environmental inspection had been carried out at the treatment plant in question. There were found to have been unauthorised discharges, of which no notice had been given in advance (a fineable offence). In addition, it was determined that the irregularities which had been found during the inspection carried out the previous year (2018) had not been remedied.

Since the sea surrounding the Azores is an essential resource for the development and autonomy of this peripheral area, and regard being had to the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC): What does the Commission intend to do to urge the canning industry and the institutions that oversee and inspect it to take the necessary steps to ensure that this situation is brought to an end?